

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) Device for processing an echo between at least two local communication devices close to one another and coupled to each other by a communication network, to attenuate, in a signal picked up by at least one microphone of one of said at least two local communication devices, the components of a signal broadcasted by at least one loudspeaker of at least one other of said at least two local communication devices,

the echo processing device being arranged for processing the signal picked up in one of said at least two local communication devices and comprising:

a receiver for receiving, via a dedicated ~~coupling connection, distinct from said telecommunication network, from~~ with at least one other of said at least two local communication devices, information representing at least one signal broadcast by at least one loudspeaker of at least one other of said at least two local communication devices,

a signal processing arrangement for modifying the signal picked up by at least one loudspeaker of at least one other of said at least two local communication devices from said information representing the broadcasted signal and for weighting the broadcasted signal by a coefficient representing ~~coupling the distance~~ between at least one loudspeaker of the at least one other communication device from at least one microphone of the communication device.

2. (Previously presented) Echo processing device according to claim 1, wherein the communication device includes the echo processing device.

3. (Previously presented) Echo processing device according to claim 2, further including a controller for controlling echo between at least one of the loudspeakers and at least one microphone of the communication device.

4. (Currently Amended) Echo processing device according to claim 1 wherein the information received representing at least one broadcasted signal from at least one other communication device was previously weighted by a coefficient representing the coupling distance between a loudspeaker of the said at least one other communication device and the microphone of the communication device.

5. (Previously presented) Echo processing device according to claim 4, wherein the signal processing arrangement for modifying the picked up signal is arranged to modify the picked up signal according to the weighted broadcasted signal of at least one other communication device in the reference echo control signal of the communication device.

6. (Currently amended) Device for processing an echo between at least two local communication devices close to one another and coupled to each other by a telecommunication network to attenuate, in a signal picked up by at least one microphone of another of said at least two local communication devices, the components of a signal broadcasted by at least one loudspeaker of at least one communication device,

the echo processing device comprising:

a receiver for obtaining information representing the signal broadcasted by the at least one loudspeaker of the communication device,

a signal processing arrangement for ~~transferring-weighting~~ the information obtained by a coefficient representing the distance between the at least one loudspeaker and at least one microphone of at least one of the other local communication devices, and transferring the weighted information via a dedicated coupling-connection, distinct from

~~said telecommunication network with at least one of the other local communication devices.~~

7. (Currently Amended) Echo processing device according to claim 6, wherein the echo processing device also comprises circuitry for obtaining information representing the coupling distance between at least one loudspeaker of the said at least one communication device and the microphone of the other communication device.

8. (Currently Amended) Echo processing device according to claim 7, wherein the signal processing arrangement is arranged for weighting the information representing the broadcasted signal of the communication device by coefficients associated with information representing the couplings distance between at least one loudspeaker of the said at least one communication device and the microphone of the other communication device.

9. (Currently Amended) Echo processing device according to claim 8, wherein the communication device comprises a plurality of loudspeakers coupled with the at least one communication device so that (a) the signals reproduced by each loudspeaker of the at least one communication device are weighted by respective coefficients representing the couplings distances between each loudspeaker of the communication device and the microphone of the other communication device and (b) the weighted signals are added.

10. (Previously presented) Echo processing device according to claim 6, wherein the circuitry is arranged for establishing the number of other communication devices and for establishing the number of loudspeakers of the other communication devices.

11. (Currently Amended) Echo processing device according to claim 10, wherein the echo processing device also comprises:

a generator for generating at least one predetermined audible signal,

a receiver for receiving, by means of ~~coupling~~ the connection with at least one other device, information representing the reception of the audible signal by at least one other device,

the signal processing arrangement being arranged for determining the ~~coupling distance~~ between a loudspeaker of the said communication device and the microphone of at least one other communication device.

12. (Currently Amended) Method of processing an echo between at least two communication devices close to one another and coupled to each other by a telecommunication network to attenuate, in a signal picked up by at least one microphone of one of said at least two local communication devices having at least one microphone of one of said at least two local communication devices, the components of a signal broadcast by at least one loudspeaker of at least one other of said at least two local communication devices, the echo processing method comprising the steps of:

receiving, via a dedicated connection, distinct from said telecommunication network ~~coupling~~, from at least one other device of said at least two local communication devices, information representing at least one signal broadcast by at least one loudspeaker of at least one other of said at least two communication devices,

modifying the signal picked up by the at least one loudspeaker of at least one other of said at least two local communication devices from said information representing the broadcasted signal by weighting the broadcast signal by a coefficient representing the ~~coupling distance~~ between the at least one loudspeaker of the said at least one other communication device and the at least one microphone of the communication device.

13. (Currently Amended) Echo processing method according to claim 12, wherein the received information representing at least one broadcast signal of at least one other communication device is weighted by a coefficient representing the ~~coupling distance~~

between a loudspeaker of the at least one other communication device and the microphone of the communication device.

14. (Previously presented) Echo processing method according to claim 13, wherein the picked up weighted signal is taken into account in a reference echo control signal of the communication device.

15. (Currently Amended) Method of processing an echo between at least two local communication devices close to one another and coupled by a telecommunication network in order to attenuate, in a signal picked up by at least one microphone of another of said at least two local communication devices including at least one microphone, the components of a signal broadcast by at least one loudspeaker of at least one communication device, the echo processing method comprising the steps of:

obtaining information representing the signal broadcast by the at least one loudspeaker of at least one communication device, ~~and~~

weighting the obtained information by a coefficient representing the distance between the at least one loudspeaker and the at least one microphone, and

transferring, by use of a dedicated ~~coupling~~ connection with at least one of the other local communication devices, the information obtained, the dedicated connection being distinct from said telecommunication network.

16. (Currently Amended) Echo processing method according to claim 15, wherein the method also comprises obtaining information representing the ~~coupling~~ distance between at least one loudspeaker of the at least one communication device and the microphone of the other communication device.

17. (Currently Amended) Echo processing method according to claim 16, wherein the echo processing method also comprises weighting the information representing the

broadcast signal of the communication device by coefficients associated with the information representing the ~~couplings~~ distances between at least one loudspeaker of said at least one communication device and the microphone of the other communication device.

18. (Currently Amended) Echo processing method according to claim 16, wherein (a) the communication device comprises a plurality of loudspeakers, and (b) the signals reproduced by each loudspeaker of the said at least one communication device are weighted by respective coefficients representing the ~~coupling~~ distance between each loudspeaker of the communication device and the microphone of the other communication device, and (c) the weighted signals are added.

19. (Previously presented) Echo processing method according to claim 15, wherein the echo processing method also comprises determining the number of other communication devices and determining the number of loudspeakers of the other communication devices.

20. (Currently Amended) Echo processing method according to claim 19, wherein the echo processing method also comprises:

generating at least one predetermined audible signal,

receiving, via ~~coupling~~ a connection, distinct from said telecommunication network, with at least one other device, information representing the reception of the audible signal by the at least one other device, and

determining the ~~coupling~~ distance between the loudspeaker of the said communication device and the microphone of at least one other communication device.

21. (Previously presented) An information medium storing a computer program for causing a computer to perform the steps of claim 12.

22. (Previously presented) An information medium storing a computer program for causing a computer to perform the steps of claim 15.

23. (Currently Amended) A system including a plurality of the devices of claim 1 wherein the dedicated ~~coupling~~ connection is arranged for coupling a wave including the information and an electric component, and the local communication devices are close enough to each other that acoustic waves are coupled between the microphones and loudspeakers of the local communication devices.

24. (Currently Amended) A system including a plurality of the devices of claim 6 wherein the dedicated ~~coupling~~ connection is arranged for coupling a wave including the information and an electric component, and the local communication devices are close enough to each other that acoustic waves are coupled between the microphones and loudspeakers of the local communication devices.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12 wherein the method is performed at each of the local communication devices, the dedicated ~~coupling~~ connection couples a wave including the information and an electric component, and the location communication devices are close enough to each other that acoustic waves are coupled between the microphones and loudspeakers of the location communication devices.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15 wherein the method is performed at each of the local communication devices, the dedicated ~~coupling~~ connection couples a wave including the information and an electric component, and the location communication devices are close enough to each other that acoustic waves are coupled between the microphones and loudspeakers of the location communication devices.